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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 1st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 30 September 2010, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Chipaziwa ..... (Zimbabwe)

Contents

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

Organization of work

Requests for hearings

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

1. **The Chairperson** said that the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States had nominated Ms. Zamora (Costa Rica) for the remaining office of Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for the sixty-fifth session.

2. *Ms. Zamora (Costa Rica) was elected Vice-Chairperson by acclamation.*

Organization of work (A/C.4/65/1; A/C.4/65/L.1; A/C.4/64/INF/1)

3. **The Chairperson** drew attention to document A/C.4/65/1, which contained the agenda items allocated to the Committee, and to document A/C.4/65/L.1, which contained the Committee's programme of work with a proposed timetable.

4. He then drew attention to the relevant rules and recommendations of the General Assembly contained in the report of the General Committee (A/65/250) regarding the work of the Main Committees, including those contained in General Assembly decision 34/401 and resolutions 58/126 and 58/316.

5. In order to make full use of the time and conference services that had been made available to the Committee, he would convene and adjourn meetings promptly and would convene meetings only when there were sufficient delegations inscribed on the list of speakers. All speakers, in particular the first three speakers for a given meeting, should be present in the Committee room on time.

6. The Assembly had decided to continue its practice of departing from the rule that one quarter of the members must be present for a Main Committee meeting to be declared open. On questions of procedure and organization of work, the Committee would comply strictly with the relevant provisions of General Assembly decision 34/401 (A/520/Rev.17, annex V). In line with the time limits for explanations of vote and rights of reply, statements on points of order should be limited to five minutes. He suggested that statements by members of the Committee during the general debate should not exceed 10 minutes, or 15 minutes in the case of those speaking on behalf of several delegations.

7. With respect to resolutions, he drew attention, inter alia, to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 48/264, which encouraged Member States to exercise restraint in making proposals requesting new reports of the Secretary-General, and to paragraph 69 of resolution 57/270 B, which requested that resolutions should be short and focus more on action-oriented operative paragraphs.

8. With regard to programme budget implications and rule 153 of the rules of procedure, he noted that the General Assembly had drawn the Committee's attention to paragraph 12 of its decision 34/401, which stated that it was imperative for the Main Committees to allow sufficient time for the preparation of the estimate of expenditures by the Secretariat and for its consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee. That could take a few days, depending on the type and complexity of a proposal. Draft resolutions, draft decisions and amendments, together with the names of the sponsors thereof, should be submitted, in writing, to the Secretariat, in both electronic and hard copies. The Secretariat required at least 48 hours to process a draft resolution.

9. According to paragraph 3 (b) of section C of the annex to resolution 58/316, the Committee would, at the end of the session, adopt a provisional programme of work for the next session. Agenda item 118, entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", had been allocated to the Committee solely for the purpose of approving the tentative programme of work for the Committee's next session. Agenda item 130, entitled "Programme planning", had been allocated to all the Main Committees and to the plenary of the General Assembly, in order to enhance discussion of evaluation, planning, budgeting and monitoring reports. Thus far, he had not received any information on that agenda item.

10. The Committee would continue with the practice of convening panels and holding interactive dialogues under agenda item 50, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space", agenda item 51, entitled "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East", item 53, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects" and item 54, entitled "Questions relating to information".

11. In accordance with the decisions taken in connection with the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, particularly resolutions 56/509 and 58/126, the Committee would take up agenda item 5, entitled "Election of the officers of the Main Committees", approximately three months before the next session of the Assembly.

12. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the programme of work and the timetable contained in document A/C.4/65/L.1.

13. *It was so decided.*

14. **The Chairperson** said that, as at previous sessions, the Committee would set up a working group of the whole to prepare draft resolutions for submission under agenda item 50, entitled "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space". It was his understanding that the working group would be chaired by the delegation of Romania. He took it that the Committee wished to establish the group.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. **The Chairperson** noted that, in approving its programme of work and timetable, the Committee had decided to hold one general debate covering all agenda items relating to decolonization, namely items 55 to 59. Doing so would enable Committee members to speak on any or all of those agenda items at any meeting devoted to the topic.

Requests for hearings (aides-memoires 01/10 and 01/10/Add.1)

17. **The Chairperson** drew attention to aides-memoires 01/10 and 01/10/Add.1, which contained 109 requests for hearings on the questions of Gibraltar, Guam, New Caledonia, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara, and suggested that they should be circulated as Committee documents.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **The Chairperson** said that he had also received communications from the Chief Minister of Gibraltar and from the President of the Government of New Caledonia, who wished to make statements under agenda item 59. Those statements would be scheduled accordingly.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.